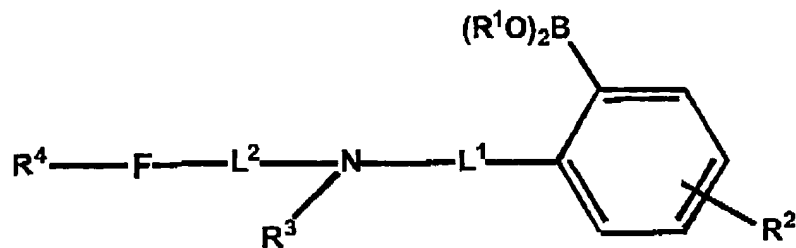


IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel pending claims 10 and 24 and withdrawn claims 29-43 and amend claims 1 and 15 as follows:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A polymer composition comprising a fluorescent boronic acid of the general formula:



wherein:

F is a fluorophore;

N is a nitrogen atom;

B is a boron atom;

R¹ is selected from the functional group consisting of hydrogen, aliphatic and aromatic groups, wherein the functional group (R¹O)₂B is capable of binding glucose;

R², R³ and R⁴ are optional and independent hydrogen, aliphatic or aromatic groups, further functionalized aliphatic or aromatic groups or groups that are capable of forming a covalent linkage to the polymer matrix, wherein the polymerized matrix is a polystyrene or a polyvinylalcohol;

L¹ and L² are optional linking groups having from zero to four atoms selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, sulfur and phosphorous; and

wherein the polymer composition further includes a reference fluorophore; and wherein the fluorescent boronic acid and the reference fluorophore are covalently coupled to the polymer matrix after polymerization; and

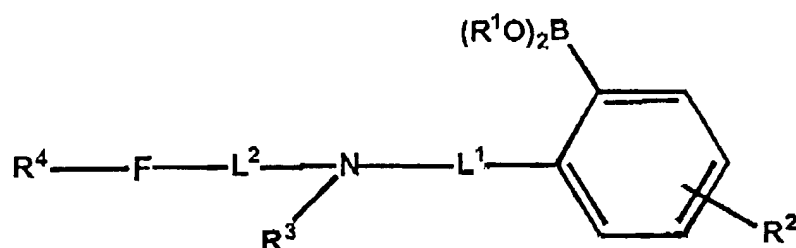
further wherein:

the polymer composition including the covalently coupled reference fluorophore and the covalently coupled fluorescent boronic acid is soluble in an aqueous environment; and

the fluorescence of the polymer composition including the covalently coupled reference fluorophore and the covalently coupled fluorescent boronic acid increases in the presence of bound glucose.

2. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 1, wherein the polymer composition further includes an additional polymer that is coupled to the polymer matrix after polymerization; and wherein the additional polymer enhances the biocompatibility, swellability or hydrophilicity of the polymer composition.
3. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 2, wherein the polymer matrix is a block copolymer.
4. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 2, wherein the additional polymer is grafted on to the polymer matrix.
5. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 2, wherein the additional polymer is a polyethyleneoxide or polyethyleneoxide-polypropyleneoxide compound.
6. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 2, wherein the polymer matrix is crosslinked.
7. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 6, wherein the polymer matrix is crosslinked with polyethyleneoxide or polyethyleneoxide-polypropyleneoxide compounds.
8. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 1, wherein the nitrogen atom in the fluorescent boronic acid is covalently coupled to the polymer matrix after polymerization via the group designated R^3 .

9. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 8, wherein the atoms that link the fluorescent boronic acid to the polymer matrix of the polymer composition enhance the solubility of the polymer composition.
10. (CANCELLED)
11. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 1, wherein the polymerized matrix is a polystyrene.
12. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 11, wherein the tether that links the polymer matrix (PM) to the fluorescent boronic acid (FBA) includes the following atoms: PM-CO-NH-FBA; PM-SO₂-NH-FBA; PM-CO-NH-FBA; PM-COO-FBA; PM-NH-COO-FBA; PM-NH-CO-N-FBA or PM-NH-SO₂-FBA, wherein C denotes carbon, N denotes nitrogen, O denotes oxygen, S denotes sulfur and H denotes hydrogen.
13. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 1, wherein the fluorophore is highly soluble in water.
14. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 13, wherein the fluorophore is Nile Blue.
15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A polymer composition comprising a fluorescent boronic acid and a reference fluorophore; wherein the composition is produced by a process of covalently coupling the fluorescent boronic acid and the reference fluorophore to a polymerized matrix, wherein the fluorescent boronic acid has the general formula:



wherein:

F is a fluorophore;

N is a nitrogen atom;

B is a boron atom;

R^1 is selected from the functional group consisting of hydrogen, aliphatic and aromatic groups, wherein the functional group $(R^1O)_2B$ is capable of binding glucose;

R^2 , R^3 and R^4 are optional and independent hydrogen, aliphatic or aromatic groups, further functionalized aliphatic or aromatic groups or groups that are capable of forming a covalent linkage to the polymer matrix, wherein the polymerized matrix is a polystyrene or a polyvinylalcohol;

L^1 and L^2 are optional linking groups having from zero to four atoms selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, sulfur and phosphorous; and

wherein the polymer composition including the covalently coupled reference fluorophore and the covalently coupled fluorescent boronic acid is soluble in an aqueous environment; and

the fluorescence of the polymer composition including the covalently coupled reference fluorophore and the covalently coupled fluorescent boronic acid increases in the presence of bound glucose.

16. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 15, wherein the polymer composition further includes an additional polymer that is covalently coupled to the polymerized matrix; and wherein the additional polymer enhances the solubility of the polymer composition.

17. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 16, wherein the polymerized matrix is a block copolymer.
18. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 16, wherein the additional polymer is grafted on to the polymerized matrix.
19. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 16, wherein the additional polymer is a polyethyleneoxide or polyethyleneoxide-polypropyleneoxide compound.
20. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 16, wherein the polymerized matrix is crosslinked.
21. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 20, wherein the polymerized matrix is crosslinked with polyethyleneoxide or polyethyleneoxide-polypropyleneoxide compounds.
22. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 15, wherein the nitrogen atom in the fluorescent boronic acid is covalently coupled to the polymerized matrix via the group designated R⁵.
23. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 22, wherein the atoms that link the fluorescent boronic acid to the polymerized matrix of polymer composition enhance the solubility of the polymer composition.
24. (CANCELLED)
25. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 15, wherein the polymerized matrix is a polystyrene.
26. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 25, wherein the tether that links the polymer matrix (PM) to the fluorescent boronic acid (FBA) includes the following atoms: PM-CO-NH-FBA; PM-SO₂-NH-FBA; PM-CO-NH-FBA; PM-COO-FBA; PM-NH-COO-FBA; PM-NH-

CO-N-FBA or PM-NH-SO₂-FBA, wherein C denotes carbon, N denotes nitrogen, O denotes oxygen, S denotes sulfur and H denotes hydrogen.

27. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 15, wherein the fluorophore is highly soluble in water.

28. (ORIGINAL) The polymer composition of claim 27, wherein the fluorophore is Nile Blue.

29-43. (CANCELLED)